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A GLIMPSE OF PARISIAN ART

BY ANNE TONCEY GIBERT.

With original illustrations by Jean Béraud and Fix-Masseau.

THE Paris art world is in a state of transition and discontent. The older artists are discouraged by the ease with which certain favorites of the moment have worked themselves into public favor by technical gymnastics.

The disfavor with which the new movement is regarded is not the result of prejudice. The older school recognizes new points of view, but draws a strong line between the sincere expression of an original conception and the unbridled parade of eccentricity.

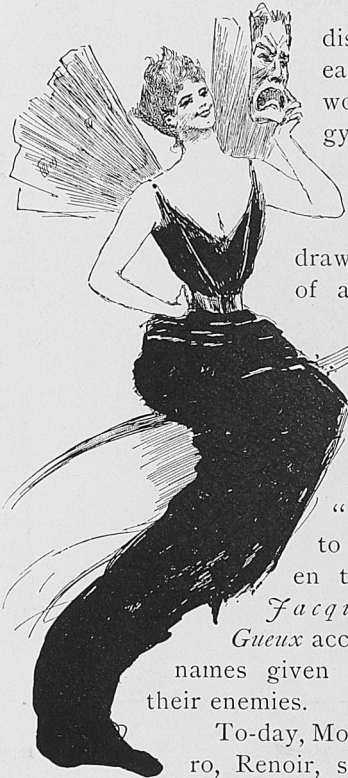
The history of the Impressionists is very simple. They were known in turn as the Independents, the Intransigents, etc.; their final designation was accidental. Monet exhibited a sketch representing a sunset upon the water. Its title was "An Impression." The term took, and was applied to the new school, which accepted it, just as in old-

en times the *Jacques* and *Gueux* accepted the names given them by their enemies.

To-day, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, stand in the same light toward Dupré, Diaz, Daubigny, Millet, and Courbet, as these stood in 1830 toward the classic school of Michallon, Bertin, and Wattelet.

Each school asked in turn for more light, more air, more nature. The new does not contest the merits of the old; its aim is to carry art a step farther in the march of intellectual development.

The pioneers of the Impressionists are men of splendid talent. They know how to draw; they know how to paint. Their work bears conviction with it because it is the outgrowth of conviction. What often appears to be dashed off in the white heat of inspiration is



By Jean Béraud.
COMEDY.



Drawn by Jean Béraud.

"FOR OUR RUSSIAN FRIENDS,"



from a painting by Jean Béraud.

THE PASSION.

the result of mature consideration. The genius of impressionism has wings unsullied by the marks of toil, but its airy creations have a solid basis, although it may not be apparent to the casual observer. If they wish to, these pioneers can do as substantial, humdrum work as the prosiest of the old school; their legion of



From a painting by Jean Béraud.

THE CRUCIFIXION.



Drawn by Jean Béraud.

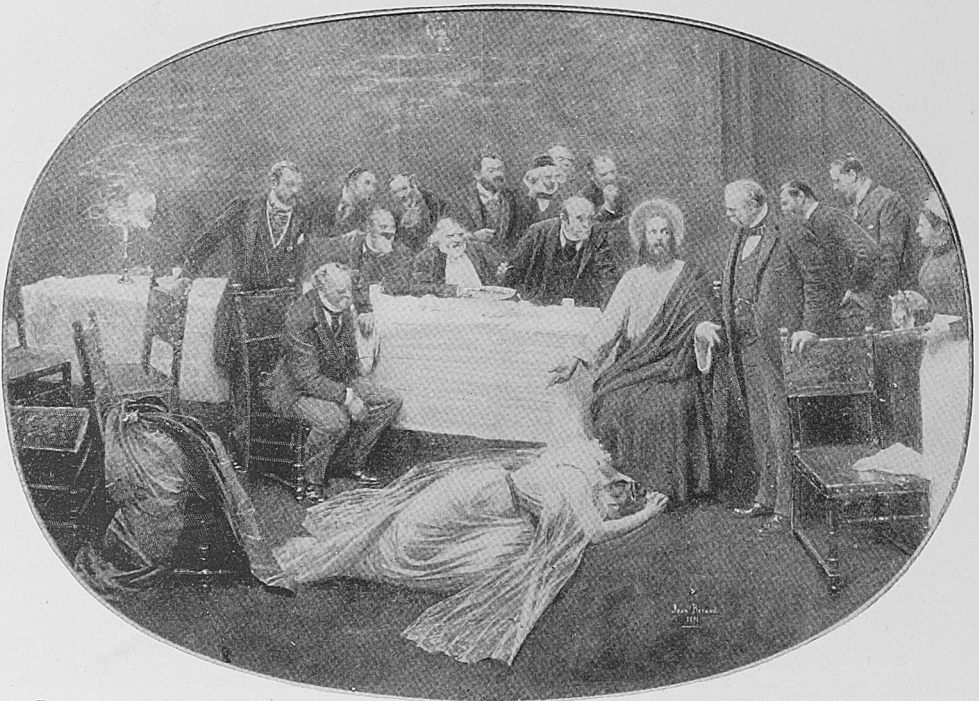
CONTRASTS.

imitators cannot. In this fact lies the tragedy of modern art.

The sickening question of dollars and cents adds to the acrimony of the battle. Men who have not reached the top of the ladder are forced into eccentricity. And then there is the fear of ridicule—a great power in France.

One cause for the ever-increasing amount of bad painting is the two great yearly exhibitions. The walls of the Palais de l'Industrie and the Champs de Mars are too vast to be covered by the works of the great painters. The aching voids are filled by the erratic productions of the flotsam and jetsam of artistic Paris. This year many of them are more objects of consideration for the psychologist than for the art critic.

Other members of this edifying school show us "art as she is felt" in the shape of blue women, green-bearded men, pink water, etc. Artists of standing cast a glance at these vagaries, smile, and pass on, but the general public is puzzled by them.



From a painting by Jean Béraud.

MARY MAGDALEN AND THE PHARISEES.



By Fix-Masseau.

SKETCH OF THE KISS.

Artists are necessarily *chercheurs*. Both artist and amateur are often led to seek the cause of a picture's success in some hidden merit which escapes their observation. One of our best American artists remarked a short time ago in New York that she would like to know the meaning of a certain Frenchman's paintings which have been largely discussed in art circles lately. It is best not to draw down the thunder of the gods upon one's head by entering in-

to direct personalities. Those interested in the said artist will know who he is when his portraits are described as resembling spirits floating in darkness and smoke, suggestive of burning curtains in the next room. The painter of these smoky pictures is generally recognized here as a man of undisputed talent. His idiosyncrasies are executed with a remarkable mastery of technique, but fathoming their mysteries will not become the open sesame to any inner circle of art meaning.

The truth is that as "good wine needs no bush," good pictures need no explanation, even though they should transgress our generally accepted theories. For the cultivated amateur the primitives, notwithstanding their almost grotesque quaintness, need no explanation because their originality was unconscious. Their faults of perspective and drawing are more touching than laughable.



By Fix-Masseau.

THE KISS.



By Fix-Masseau.

IDEAS DIFFICULT TO EMBODY IN VERSE.

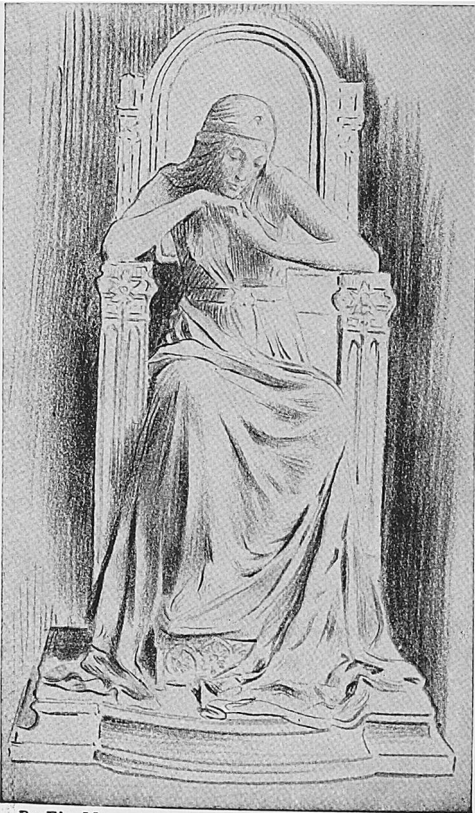
They had no standards to go by. They groped their way along the virgin road of art as best they could, guided only by their innate love of beauty. They believed in what they did. Their work bears a seal of faith which will make it sacred through all time.

Turn it as one will, the greatest merit of any work of art is sugges-



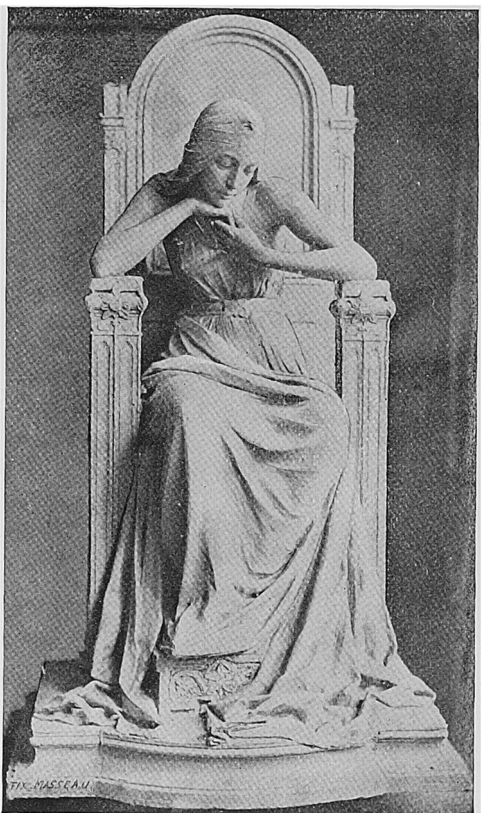
By Fix-Masseau.

SKETCH OF IDEAS DIFFICULT TO EMBODY IN VERSE.



By Fix-Masseau.

SKETCH OF THE CHATELAINE.



By Fix-Masseau.

THE CHATELAINE.

tiveness, and this subtle charm made Jean Béraud spring into public favor almost at the beginning of his career. Wielding his brush with a purpose, he cuts the Gordian Knot of the tiresome discussion upon the relative merits of the real and the ideal by showing us that they are practically one.

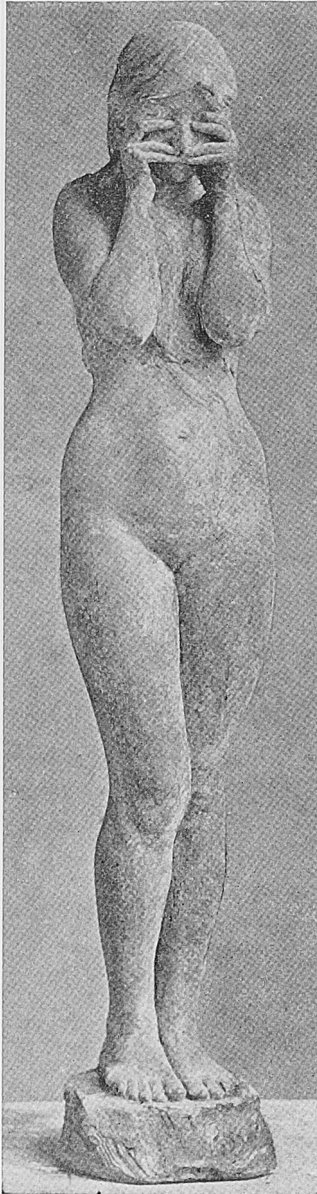
In all ages a great artist has not been the interpreter of purely personal sentiment. He is one gifted with the genius

of expression denied the many. The mode of expression depends upon the moral temperature in which he has been nurtured. Béraud has studied every phase of modern sociology, and shows us its gaping wounds with a frankness of satire worthy of Juvenal himself.

Those who were scandalized at first have understood that in representing religious subjects in modern garb, Béraud has only done what all the old masters did in their time. But the old masters often gave us mere symbolic conceptions, while Béraud's biblical characters are essentially living human beings.

Fix-Masseau works from a purely individual standpoint, and can only appeal to those who love sincerity and innovation. He belongs to the unfortunately small class of sculptors who are doing for their branch of art what the leading Impressionists did for painting. In their turn they want "light, air, and nature."

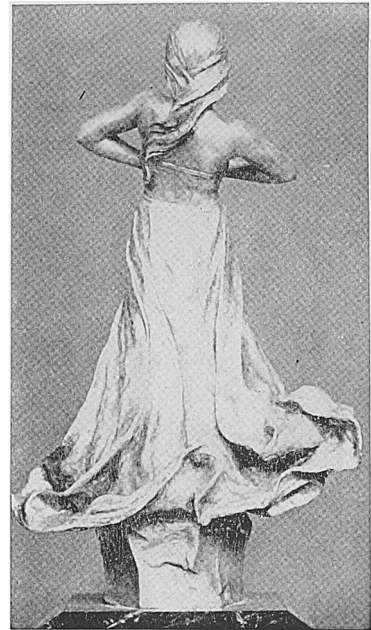
He is only four or five and twenty years of age, but by dint of hard work he has already made himself



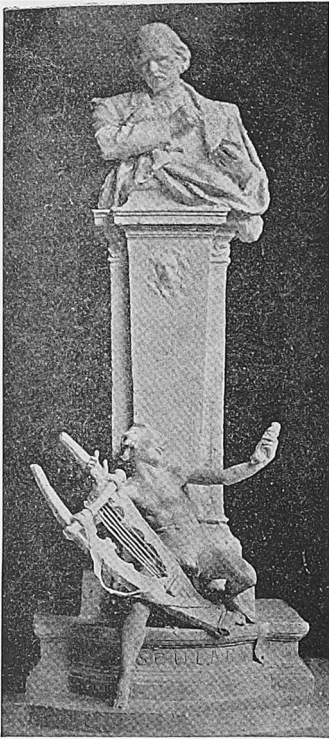
By Fix-Masseau.
NIHIL.



By Fix-Masseau.
SECRECY.



By Fix-Masseau.
IDEAS DIFFICULT TO EMBODY IN VERSE.



By Fix-Masseau.

BUST OF J. SOULARY.

from twelve to fourteen hours a day. At the end of three years he was ready to show the world that non-admittance to the Beaux-Arts was not necessarily synonymous with lack of talent. Success is a dangerous draught to quaff so early in life, however, and it remains to be seen whether Fix-Masseau will have the courage to resist its intoxicating effects and live up to his own high ideals of art.

Béraud also has too much mind and is too highly educated to be satisfied with turning in a circle. His talent has ripened with his intellect, and his later work springs from a deeper source than the mere seeking of a new subject. Those who have grasped the signification of Béraud's paintings will not be surprised to learn that before beginning his art studies he won the first prize of philosophy in the yearly contest between the most brilliant students of the principal Parisian colleges. He distinguished himself by

famous. In sculpture the best work of the year has been done by Fix-Masseau and Saint Merceau. Of course this opinion will not be shared by all. No opinion ever is. Opinions can only be approved by those who have looked at the world, artistically and otherwise, from the same point of view. Fix-Masseau thoroughly appreciates the beauty and meaning of Greek sculpture, but he feels that it was the expression of an ideal and a civilization which has little in common with the complex intellectuality of the nineteenth century.

From early boyhood, when he entered successively the art schools of Dijon and Lyons, he carried away every prize and medal to be had. When he went to Paris he was expected to meet with the same sweeping success. By this time his talent had grown too self-reliant for him to continue in the beaten track. He competed three times unsuccessfully for admittance to the Beaux-Arts. Its Procrustean laws were more than he could stand. At last he gave up battling against his own inspirations and began working on his own accord. For three years he shut himself up in a dreary little studio, where he worked



By Fix-Masseau.

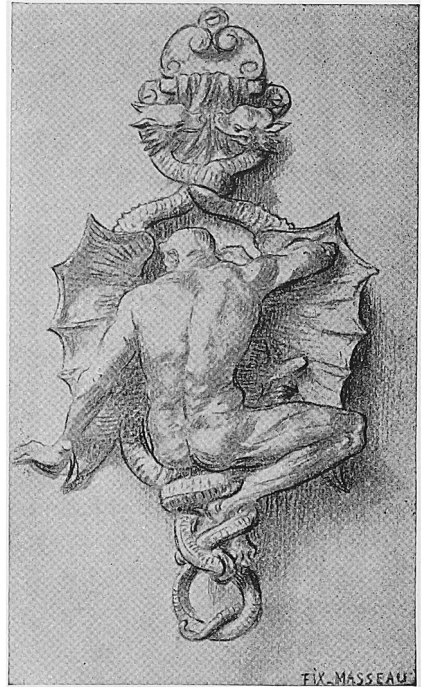
UNITED GRIEF.

his gallant conduct during the Franco-Prussian war.

To bring Christ among us amidst modern surroundings was a daring thing to do, especially for a man like Béraud, who is a great social favorite and nothing of a Bohemian.

Many of his friends and the bigoted portion of the community were horrified when two years ago repentance was held up to their gaze in the shape of a Mary Magdalen in the splendor of a modern ball-dress. The lesson was an unpleasant one which many refused to take to heart. The Crucifixion had a deeper meaning still. The Saviour dead—his cross crowning the summit of Montmartre, surrounded by the faithful followers who crouch in modern tatters at the foot of the crucifix. In the background the great city of Paris rolls out into darkness and space, wrapt in selfishness and sloth, heedless of the tragedy on the hill and of the anarchist threatening destruction on its brink.

The picture for this year's exhibition represents Christ bearing his cross. In the foreground the few who do their duty, in



Drawn by Fix-Masseau.

DESIGN FOR DOOR-KNOCKER.



Drawn by Fix-Masseau.

HAUNTED.

the background the many who do not. The Saviour staggers beneath his burden. Mary Magdalen, haggard and worn, follows him to the end. Her blonde hair falls uncared for on her shoulders. She passes through the brutal crowd unconscious of its jeers, for her love has turned shame into sanctity, despair into hope.

There is such an element of religious elevation in these pictures that no one has thought of ridiculing their original conception. The genuine art world here wants liberty, but not license. There is the whole story in a nutshell. And the time has gone by when the public was slow to admit of anything new; on the contrary, the newer, the madder, the better, until the older artists begin to feel very much as the owner of a valuable tulip garden might feel were he to see a drove of wild colts scampering over his beloved flower-beds. No doubt but that the colts will be eventually caught and harnessed, but putting the trampled garden to rights again is a disheartening business,